

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

This Document contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States, within the meaning of Title 18, Sections 793 and 794, of the U.S. Code, as amended. Its transmission or revelation of its contents to or receipt by an unauthorized person is prohibited by law. The reproduction of this form is prohibited.

SECRET
SECURITY INFORMATION

COUNTRY USSR (Kalinin Oblast)

REPORT NO.

25X1

SUBJECT Working Conditions and Personnel at
Branch No. 1 of NII 88, Gorodomlya Island

DATE DISTR.

15 July 1953

NO. OF PAGES

5

REQUIREMENT NO.

25X1

REFERENCES

THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

HISTORY OF THE INSTALLATION ON GORODOMLYA ISLAND

1. Prior to our arrival on Gorodomlya Island, the installation had been used as a convalescent home and a research institute. At one time an experimental station for medical or bacteriological research was situated on the island. The windows of the main building, which was located there at the time of our arrival, faced north and the southern exposure was completely sealed off. Under the existing climatic conditions such a structure could only have been used for work activities, not for residential purposes.

SECRET

STATE	#x	ARMY	#x	NAVY	#x	AIR	#x	FBI		AEC									
-------	----	------	----	------	----	-----	----	-----	--	-----	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

25X1

SECRET

- 2 -

2. The basement rooms were organized into stalls, and the many cages indicate that animals had been kept there. The type of medical or bacteriological research that had been performed there is not known to me, nor can I identify the period during which these experiments were performed. I should think, however, that it was prior to the war, since during the war the Island served as a convalescent hospital for Soviet military personnel.

DESCRIPTION OF GENERAL FACILITIES ON GORODOMLYA ISLAND

3. Upon our arrival in Ostashkov we were met by rather primitive conditions. The Soviets had either not anticipated our arrival, or had done little to prepare for it. The existing facilities were neither fit for living, nor for work. Nothing was available except housing, and this was in disrepair as a result of war-time destruction. Most of the houses were gradually reconstructed during our stay, and some new structures were added. This was necessary as we were later joined by a German group which had been active in Podlipki.
4. Electricity and water facilities were inadequate. Though we were surrounded by forests, no wood was available for heating. As a result, we spent the first period of our stay on the Island organizing our new homes, and collecting the basic materials with which to make life and work possible.
5. During the years that followed, work facilities were gradually expanded. By the end of 1947, we had obtained some tooling machines such as lathes and milling machines. The water supply problem was also solved by the end of 1947. Electrical supplies and equipment arrived slowly and thus our power supply improved. The machines which we obtained were in part of Soviet and of German origin. The method of procurement was not known to me; these matters were handled exclusively by the Soviet administration.
6. The obtaining of supplies, even the most necessary, was always a time-consuming process. In an effort to obtain supplies, we would plead with the Soviets or would shout. We tried to impress them of our needs by working harder, or we would slow down; yet all methods were to no avail in speeding up the procurement of materials. Since our projects were always on a time schedule, our supply problems were a paradox. True, the Soviet administration at Ostashkov was aware of our difficulties in meeting our project completion dates when supply bottlenecks arose, and it is also true that they were probably also held responsible for meeting specific critical dates. The Soviets, therefore, did attempt to procure the needed technical equipment. But there was a typical Soviet attitude, formal but unrealistic. Having reassured themselves by making the necessary formal requisition, they could always point to the requisition for material in justification for their inability to meet schedules. Meanwhile, however, we went without firewood or without drawing equipment.

ORGANIZATION OF PERSONNEL AT GORODOMLYA

Criteria for Leadership

7. Political considerations did not enter in determining the composition of the German group. As a result, the hierarchy which was established was based on the normal considerations employed in any industrial enterprise. Not always was the leader of the German group, or the

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

sector chiefs, the most professionally capable. Other factors, such as age, academic achievements, or popularity among the German specialists, weighed much more heavily. Such a selection policy left the technically capable in a position to work more intensively on research problems since they were not constantly preoccupied with managerial problems, nor did they have to cope with the Soviet administration. This criteria best explains the selection of GROETTRUP, but is also applicable to the placement of such sector chiefs as [] who headed the designing section. A hierarchy established on such a basis, however, could not be regarded as detrimental from the standpoint of productiveness. On the contrary, it served to make our work more effective.

- 25X1
8. The effect of this non-political personnel policy was that, at least in the beginning, the German personnel was organized along the lines that had existed in Germany during 1945 and 1946 when we were employed by the Soviets in various institutes, e.g., at Institute Raabe. Only minor changes became necessary when personnel from the other Soviet institutes in Germany were assigned to Ostashkov and had to be integrated into the German collective. Another reason for only minor organizational changes was the division that took place of the Raabe Institute personnel; in that one group went to Podlipki while another went to Ostashkov. On the whole, however, the old pattern was maintained. It should be mentioned in this regard, that in the beginning of 1948 the Podlipki group rejoined us in Ostashkov, and I believe that the institute at which they had worked was dissolved. I can not, however, furnish any more details concerning the Podlipki institute.
- 25X1

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

- 4 -

SOVIET PERSONNEL

10. Generally speaking, the Soviets in Ostashkov engaged only in administrative functions. They were responsible for the supervision of our work, for the translation of our reports, for procurement of supplies, and for the security of the installation. Few, if any, attempted to engage in work which might parallel the research work of the Germans. This was generally because of their inability to do more than perform administrative tasks. Toward the end of our stay, and while we were working on the R-113 Project [redacted] increasing pressure was put on the Soviets to familiarize themselves with the German projects and to actively join the Germans in their work. On the whole, however, when the Soviets finally began to engage in scientific research activities in Ostashkov, the work was performed by a group of new arrivals. These new arrivals consisted of two types of engineers: the recent graduates, and those who apparently had had some training in the missiles field. In our opinion, their technical capabilities were rather limited, and their contributions in the missile branch unimportant.
11. The Soviets were gradually to take over the work performed by the German scientists. This transition first occurred in the radio and control laboratories. They were less active in the static and design sections, where complete reports were available to permit the Soviets to familiarize themselves with the progress in those departments. At first the Soviets worked side by side with the German specialists in these laboratories. After a while, however, the Germans were withdrawn; and, once withdrawn, they were no longer permitted access to their former laboratories or offices.
12. The original Soviet administrative personnel remained virtually unaffected during and after the transition which was described above. I am unable to furnish any information as to the type of work which the Soviets performed after our departure. However, I believe that they were hardly in a position to carry out any original research work.

25X1

SOVIET-GERMAN RELATIONS AT GORODOMLYA ISLAND

13. The German leadership group quickly perceived that there was an insurmountable gulf between the Soviet and German personnel. This led to an atmosphere of hostility which, while never open, was reflected in the many squabbles over our work. The source of the difficulty was the difference between the German and Soviet approach to research problems. Furthermore, the Soviets wanted to get from us as much as they possibly could and under conditions which at times were impossible, both in regard to the living standard there and the absence of the most elemental basis for work. The latter began with a lack of pencils and poor paper, and ended with the lack of experimental facilities.
14. The German leaders strove to keep the friction and problems that might arise out of this difference to a minimum by organizing the German collective as a unified group, distinct from the Soviets. That is, they hoped to restrict the Soviet supervision to the very top level by having the Soviets assign requirements to the Germans, but leaving it to the German chiefs to carry out the details of the project. We hoped that we might operate as a German engineering consultant office. The Soviets, however, resolutely opposed any such plans. From the very beginning every activity was constantly subjected to close scrutiny. The German leadership was

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

- 5 -

never any more than a shadow of the Soviet administration. Decisions were made only by the Soviets. Every German supervisor had his Soviet counterpart, so that the Soviet supervision penetrated every level of our organization. This network was made even more effective by the appointment of a Soviet technical supervisor who, as an inspector general of sorts, maintained contact with all German departments, reviewed their plans, and received their suggestions. He was kept current on German activities, and could at any time interfere with work, something which occurred continuously.

15. A certain amount of research freedom was extended to us in the beginning. This policy was in effect during the period in which the Germans worked on the R-10 Project [redacted] But even this freedom was quickly curtailed. Not in the sense that every dimension and material was prescribed by the Soviets, but rather in that the final goal of a particular project was clearly defined by the Soviets, as well as the time element. Also, they kept informed of every phase of the development, and were most critical. Later, their control became iron clad when they resorted to salary cuts and threats of every kind.

16. To make the best of this condition, it was a general agreement among the Germans to maintain a certain unity vis-a-vis the Soviets, in regard to problems relating to the research assignments as well as to economic and social problems that constantly served to deter us. Unfortunately, all attempts to maintain a unified front and thus gain the attention of the Soviets met with only minor success. The attempt at unity should not be misunderstood as representing some sort of passive resistance. Such a policy would have been unrealistic as well as futile. Under the circumstances we could neither wholeheartedly support nor oppose, unless we invited our doom. It appeared to be the policy of the Soviets to prevent German solidarity. Their motive was undoubtedly to increase our output by having us work in an atmosphere of competition rather than one of cooperation.

17. Opportunities for spreading discord were many. The favorite Soviet method was the discrediting of a superior before his subordinates. Surprisingly, their tactics misled many Germans to blame their German superiors. This game had many subtle variants and was played by the Soviets repeatedly. The result was at any rate, that the unity we had tacitly strived for was prevented. Extreme examples of disaffection were in the cases of [redacted] who reacted in exactly opposite ways; the former, in that he virtually became an informer of the Soviets, and the latter in that he accused other Germans of committing treason by working with the Soviets. Unfortunately, however, the Soviet machinations did not influence these two individuals alone. Wide circles of specialists were influenced by this policy. This was evidenced by the great friction which existed between the German superiors and their subordinates. Only towards the end of our stay did this friction abate, when the Germans, even the most naive, began to understand the Soviet tactics.

18. The irrationality of our behavior becomes clear when it is realized that the subordinates accused the superiors of working too closely with the Soviets, and the superiors, in turn, accused the subordinates of exactly the same thing. Judging the situation objectively, the accusation against the German superiors, with the sole exception [redacted] was not justified. On the contrary, within limits, they repeatedly reproached the Soviets. Through their many dealings with the Soviets, however, they realized the situation much earlier, and then gauged the possible from the quixotic. Their refusal to approach the Soviets with matters that they knew in advance could not or would not be changed frequently resulted in unjust accusations.

SECRET